



Summer 2007 AMA Educators' Conference High Impact Sessions

Session 7.3 Making the Most of the First Five Years

Session Chair: Sandy Jap, Emory University

Presenters:

Koen Pauwels, Dartmouth College
Americus Reed, University of Pennsylvania
Rebecca Slotegraaf, Indiana University
Wendy Moe, University of Maryland

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The tenure clock starts ticking the moment one enters a doctoral program, but the pressure becomes intense during the first few years as an assistant professor. The presenters in this session discussed a number of strategies to make the first few years successful and productive. Common themes that emerged during the presentations were managing time, managing the research pipeline, building relationships, and balancing work and life.

Time is one of our most valuable resources. As such, time management becomes crucially important in order to be successful as an assistant professor. Some suggestions for successful time management included compartmentalizing time, setting deadlines, and creating synergies between research, teaching and service.

Managing the research pipeline is critically important in order to meet tenure requirements. The presenters suggested working on big problems that will generate a stream of research, creating a research vision that focuses on how you want to be known and how you will get there, developing short term goals for your research, and never underestimating how much time will be taken up by the review process.

All of the presenters agreed that building relationships with co-authors at an early stage is extremely important. The presenters believed that co-author relationships should be developed during the doctoral program, and that one should work with active and motivated co-authors who have skills that are complementary to one's own. It is important to actively manage these co-author relationships while also seeking to form new ones.

Balancing work and life should be done from the beginning, instead of waiting to make time for life until after tenure. The presenters stated that life after tenure is surprisingly busier. One should make time for life, relationships and health at all stages in the process.